

IN MEMORY OF HONORABLE R.
LAWRENCE COUGHLIN

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2001

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, today is a bitter-sweet day. It is with both great sadness and immense pride that I rise today in honor and celebration of the life of my friend, the Honorable R. Lawrence Coughlin.

Robert Lawrence Coughlin was born on April 11, 1929 in Wilkes-Barre, PA, and grew up on his father's farm near Scranton, PA. He served distinguishably as a Republican Member of the United States Congress for 24 years, from January 1969–January 1993 representing a portion of Philadelphia, PA and its surrounding suburban Main Line area.

Lawrence's accomplishments were great during his tenure in Congress. He was a man of great honor and truly a gentleman. I had the pleasure of serving with him while I was Chairman of the Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control and he served as the Ranking Republican Member.

At first glance, one would perceive our relationship as that of the "Odd Couple" as Lawrence and I strolled side by side through the Capitol as he donned his signature bow tie and me wearing a more conventional necktie. He represented the wealthy suburban Main Line area of Philadelphia and I represent the vibrant Harlem area of New York City. However, we had many shared interests and experiences.

Lawrence Coughlin served in the Marine Corps during the Korean War. His military training was evident in the way he conducted himself in the Congress. He was a very disciplined man who took a dogged approach to tackling the difficult problems that face the nation and the Congress. I remember his passion for the youth of our great nation. This passion was the source of his drive to do whatever was necessary during his tenure on the Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control to rid our communities of the scourge of drugs. Although some would say, Lawrence had a Patrician air about him I would say he had the air of a proud ex-marine who viewed the war on drugs as a series of unending battles to be confronted head on until the war was won and victory proclaimed. As a man of great consciousness, I will forever remember his stamina and commitment in his efforts to eliminate drugs from our communities, making the world a better place for our youth.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all my colleagues join me in celebrating the life and the political accomplishments of my great friend, the Honorable R. Lawrence Coughlin.

INTRODUCTION OF FEDERAL INDIAN RECOGNITION REFORM LEGISLATION

HON. ROB SIMMONS

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2001

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, our Federal Indian recognition process is broken. Recogni-

tion decisions don't take months to decide, they take years—and sometimes decades. Towns and other interested parties—sometimes forced to spend millions because of federal recognition policies—rightfully believe their concerns and comments are often ignored. Criteria for recognition has been overlooked rather than upheld under previous BIA administrators. In short, the public and Indian tribes have lost faith in the current recognition process.

A new administration has brought some hope in fixing this important process. To this end, I am rising today to introduce legislation that lays out a seven-point plan for reforming the federal Indian recognition process.

Specifically, my bill would first require the BIA to notify states whenever a tribe within them files for federal recognition. The state must in turn ensure that notice is given to towns adjacent to that tribe.

Second, the legislation would require the BIA to accept and consider any testimony—including from surrounding towns and others—that bears on whether or not BIA recognizes a tribe.

Third, under my measure, the BIA would be required to find affirmatively that all recognition criteria are met in order to confer federal recognition and any decision conferring recognition must be accompanied by a written set of findings as to how all criteria have been satisfied.

Fourth, I put forth language that would double—from \$900,000 to \$1.8 million—the resources for the BIA's Branch of Acknowledgment and Research Division to upgrade its recognition process.

To help localities adversely affected by federally recognized tribes, my bill provides \$8 million in grants to local governments to assist such governments in participating in certain decisions related to certain Indian groups and Indian tribes. These grants could be applied retroactively to any local government that has spent money on decisions related to certain Indian groups and/or tribes.

In addition, my legislation also creates a grant program of \$10 million to be made available to federally impacted towns for relevant infrastructure, public safety and social service needs directly related to tribal activities.

And lastly, the measure would institute a "cooling off period" of one year, in which any high-level BIA official could not appear before their former agency.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to introduce this bill with three of my colleagues from Connecticut—Mrs. JOHNSON and Messrs. SHAYS and MALONEY—and the gentleman from Wisconsin, Mr. GREEN. I urge others who care about federal Indian recognition issues to join us in working toward a recognition process that is fair, open and respectful to all parties involved.

STUDIES ENDORSE PROJECT LABOR AGREEMENTS

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2001

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I wish to bring the results of two re-

cent studies on the value of project labor agreements (PLAS) to the attention of my colleagues.

The California Research Bureau, a non-partisan confidential research arm of the Governor's office and the state legislature concluded that project labor agreements are "valued by owners and construction firms alike [because of] the role PLAs play in resolving disputes over roles contractors and subcontractors play in large and complex projects." The CRB report also credited PLAs for promoting local economic development, workforce training, and employment goals for women and minorities.

The UCLA Institute for Labor and Employment has also recently released a study that found that PLAs do not increase labor costs, do not exclude non-union workers, encourage competition, promote stability, cooperation and productivity, and reduce the likelihood of work stoppages or delays.

Mr. Speaker, these studies merely confirm what has long been understood by those involved in private and public sector construction who are not otherwise driven by ideology: Project labor agreements promote the timely completion of construction projects and increase productivity. They are good for business. They also promote apprenticeship training and help secure better working conditions. They are good for workers.

Unfortunately, among those who are most driven by ideology is the Bush Administration.

According to the December 13, 2001 issue of The Washington Post, Maryland has been forced by the Bush Administration to proceed with the enormous Wilson Bridge construction project without the ability to use a project labor agreement. I am sure that my colleagues recall that last February, shortly after taking office, President Bush tried to ban project labor agreements for any construction project receiving federal money. In a decision that specifically involved the Wilson Bridge project, a federal judge ruled in November that the ban issued by President Bush violated federal law and the Constitution. Following the decision, the Maryland State Highway Administration again sought permission from the Federal Highway Administration to implement a project labor agreement. But according to the Post, the Federal Highway Administration rejected Maryland's request saying the state had not proved the need for a PLA.

By effectively prohibiting the use of a project labor agreement on the Wilson Bridge project, the Bush Administration continues to thwart good business practice and good labor policy to the detriment of taxpayers and continues to deny working Americans the protections they are entitled to under law. I commend to my colleagues' and the administration's attention the reports concerning project labor agreements by the California Research Bureau and the UCLA Institute for Labor and Employment, and I sincerely hope that the Administration reconsiders its unwise hostility for these proven agreements that benefit business, taxpayers, workers and the public in general.